merchants in its ports. Not only did it continue the Tang custom of allowing them to settle many of their disputes among themselves, but it permitted them to decide according to their own laws all but the more serious offenses of foreigners against Chinese. The foreign merchants seem mostly to have been Moslem Arabs. Many of them married Chinese women and at least one man of Arabic origin held high office under the Sung and at the close of the dynasty went over to the Mongols. A colony of Jews which has been finally absorbed into the surrounding population only in our own day built a synagogue at K'aif eng.

Trade with Japan flourished. Japanese Buddhist monks, principally of the Zen (Ch'an) sect, journeyed to China to visit the strongholds of their school. Chinese monks, coming to Japan, were often given high positions in monasteries and were transmitters, not only of Buddhism, but of Chinese civilization in general, including the Confucian Classics and secular literature. Sung Neo-Confucianism was to have a marked effect in the islands. Official intercourse between the two governments, however, appears not to have been established.

The Chinese records assert that tribute-bearing embassies arrived in the Sung court from Champa, in the present French Indo-China, from states in such distant regions as Java and Sumatra, and even from India. Whether these embassies indicate the recognition of China's suzerainty is highly doubtful, but they probably show that these principalities deemed commercial relations profitable. Before the dynasty was driven south, moreover, two embassies came from Fulin, or, as it will be recalled, what we now call the Near East.

The Chinese knowledge of geography was expanding, and a

work of the time shows that some information concerning even such distant countries as Egypt and Sicily had reached the Middle Kingdom. This was brought not only by foreign merchants but also by Chinese who went abroad and returned with news of distant lands. Chinese sailing craft were improving: some of the vessels accommodated several hundred persons as passengers or crew.

The articles of trade included, as heretofore, only those which combined small bulk with large value—among them piece-goods, lead, gold., silver, porcelain-ware, incense and scented woods,